



East Cambridge Riverfront Plan

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

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The Intent of this Publication

This publication's purpose is to inform developers, businessmen, landowners, governmental agencies and concerned citizens of Cambridge's proposal to transform a blighted, largely vacant industrial area of the East Cambridge riverfront into a dramatic new urban development. This 40-acre site is planned to be a mixed use development of retail, residential, office and institutional uses, enriched with numerous public amenities. The plan offers a broad range of benefits that include significant tax advantages for the City and thousands of new jobs. The City's urban design plan, development objectives and guidelines, implementation strategy, and capital improvement plan necessary to bring about this transformation are presented in this report.

Special thanks are extended for the local, County, State and Federal support we have received to date. The City of Cambridge is most grateful to: the residents and businessmen of East Cambridge, the office of the Lieutenant Governor, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, the Metropolitan District Commission, the Middlesex County Commissioners, and the State Planning Office. The continuing support of Congressman O'Neil, Senator Brooke, and Senator Kennedy has been greatly appreciated.

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Aerial Photos of New England, figures 1, 34.
 Cambridge Historical Commission, figures 4, 7, 9, 10, 15-20, 46, 60.
 Dennis Carlone, photography, figures 24, 43-45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 70.
 Richard Cheek, photography for the Cambridge Historical Comm., 55-59.
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1 Introduction

East Cambridge is now at a critical point in its historical evolution — a point at which fundamental decisions must be made. The past twenty years have seen shifts in land uses and continual decay of what was once the city's major industrial area. Some indicators of these changes are: the recent closing and subsequent demolition of the National Casket Building, the closing of Carter Ink, the vacancy of two major riverfront buildings, change of ownership and use of several other industrial buildings in the Lechmere area.

Should continued neglect of the East Cambridge Riverfront and industrial area be permitted to further erode the neighborhood's physical environment and the city's economic viability? The obvious answer was reiterated through a series of comprehensive planning meetings and discussions held in the neighborhood in 1975 and 1976.

In 1976 the Cambridge Planning Board authorized the Community Development Department to undertake a comprehensive urban design study of East Cambridge. The object of the study was to formulate a developmental framework for the East Cambridge riverfront that would benefit a broad range of interests: neighborhood and city, public and private.

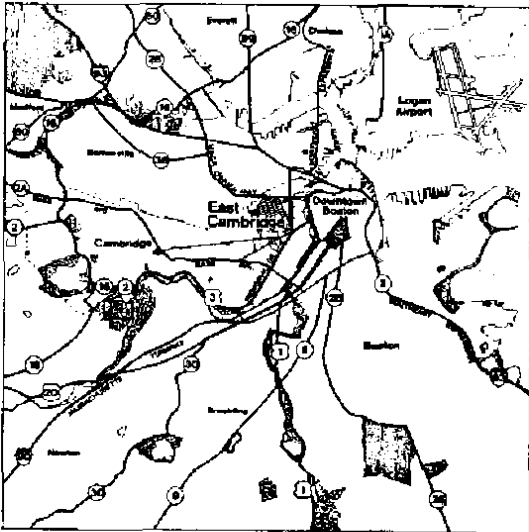
Five underlying goals have guided this urban design study: (1) increased employment opportunities; (2) expansion of the city's tax base; (3) enhancement of physical environment; (4) conservation of the neighborhood's existing social and economic diversity; and (5) exploitation of the environmental, recreational, and economic potential offered by the Charles Riverfront.

East Cambridge's many physical attributes, its historical diversity, current pressures for change, and the enthusiasm of various interest groups provide opportunities for creating a positive future for the neighborhood. The East Cambridge urban design study has analyzed these opportunities and developed an exciting new image which meets the study goals for this area of the City.

1. Aerial Photograph.
Photograph shows East Cambridge's prominence on the Charles River and proximity to downtown Boston. The East Cambridge riverfront lies in the foreground between the two major bridges at the center of the photograph.

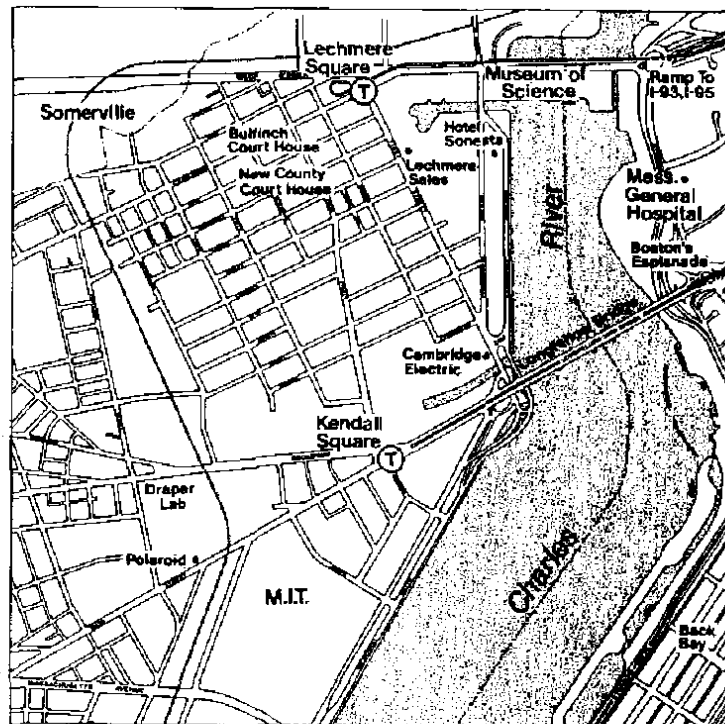
The following actions are the necessary prerequisites to realizing a prosperous and vital East Cambridge Riverfront.

1. Create a 16-acre open space system that would form the skeleton for new development, as well as link the historical residential community to the Charles River.
2. Transform the Lechmere Canal into the focal point of an animated and unique public space surrounded by retail activity and residential use.
3. Eliminate blight at Lechmere Square and Monsignor O'Brien Highway by integrating a new transit station location with proposed development.
4. Implement one of the proposed by-pass plans by which unnecessary through traffic can be diverted around the East Cambridge neighborhood and Kendall Square.
5. Convert Cambridge Parkway into a half-mile long park and access road at the River's edge by shifting its current traffic load to a widened two-way Commercial Avenue.
6. Protect and enhance the historical resources of East Cambridge.
7. Rezone the present industrially zoned land into a pattern of distinct districts which both embodies the City's development objectives and establishes a clear, constructive framework for private developers.
8. Work with existing businesses, landowners and new developers to develop and improve retail activity, industrial activity, office activity and housing.
9. Protect the East Cambridge community from uncontrolled land use changes and offer the residents housing rehabilitation and subsidy assistance.



2. Regional Context.

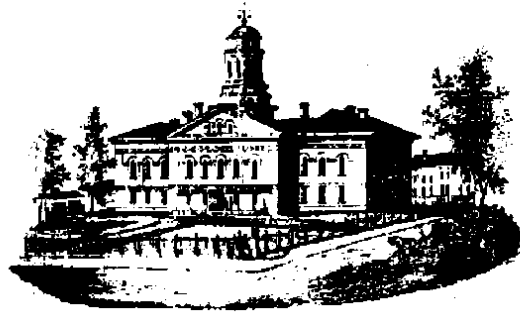
Logan International Airport is minutes away and major regional highway crossroads (the intersections of I-95 with I-93 and the Massachusetts Turnpike) are located nearby.



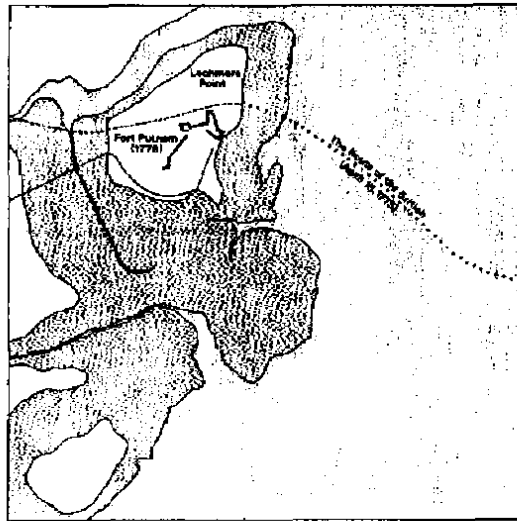
3. Major Neighborhood Landmarks.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is located along the southern edge of the East Cambridge neighborhood. Harvard University is just across town, and Massachusetts General Hospital is within a ten-minute walk on the Boston side of the Charles River.

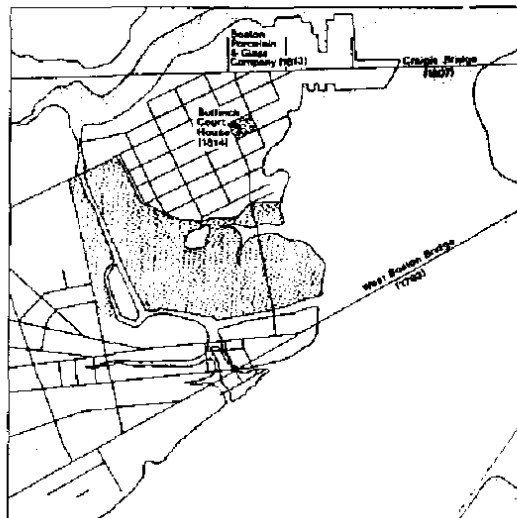
2 History of East Cambridge



4. The Middlesex County Courthouse.
Designed by Charles Bulfinch, the courthouse looked like this in 1854.



5. Circa 1790
East Cambridge became an island at high tide. Its military importance stemmed not only from East Cambridge's nearness to Boston, but also from the island's sixty-five foot height above sea level.



6. Circa 1850.

A review of East Cambridge's historical evolution contributes to an understanding of the existing situation, the forces that created it, and the elements necessary in planning for its rejuvenation and future.

East Cambridge is rich in history. During the Revolution, Lechmere's Point played a strategic role. The British landed there on April 19, 1775 and began their march to Lexington and Concord. General George Washington built Fort Putnam there on the highest point. In March, 1776, during the Siege of Boston, the patriots routed the British from this location.

In the early 1800's, East Cambridge was still an island surrounded by marshland, but by the end of the 19th century landfilling had quadrupled the available land. The island was one of the first large scale speculative real estate undertakings in the United States. The original street grid remains today much the same as it was laid out in 1811 for development by the Lechmere Point Corporation.

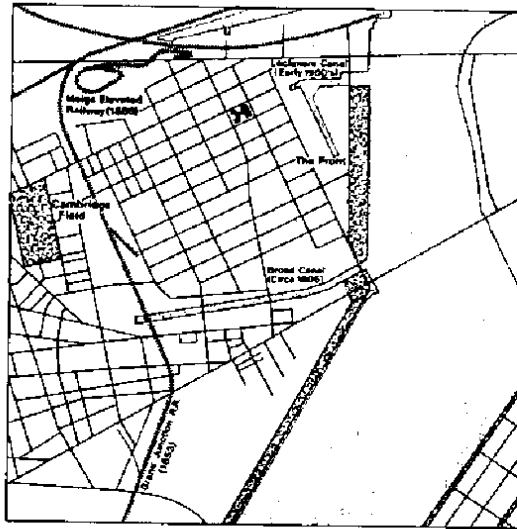
The corporation made two astute moves which guaranteed the success of their venture. First, they convinced the county government, then based in Harvard Square, to relocate in East Cambridge. For this purpose the corporation donated land and money for a courthouse designed by Boston's leading architect, Charles Bulfinch. (Bulfinch also designed the Massachusetts State House and the U. S. Capitol building). Secondly, the corporation persuaded the Boston Porcelain and Glass Company to move into East Cambridge. This action set a precedent and led the way for the future industrialization and development of East Cambridge.

Before the Civil War there was a good balance of residential and industrial activity. Factory workers lived in modest cottages. Clerks, lawyers, merchants and businessmen occupied "Quality Row" and "Millionaire's Row." Toward the Charles River, furniture and soap manufacturing concerns sprang up on newly landfilled areas.

Waves of immigration brought Irish, Italians, Lithuanians, Poles and Portuguese who represented an abundant source of low cost labor for the local factories. The value of East Cambridge land sky-rocketed when its suitability for industrial purposes was enhanced by the arrival of the railroad in 1853. The construction of Lechmere Canal in 1895 further improved transportation access. The

final landfilling (to the present granite retaining walls) was completed at the turn of the century.

But not all land was planned for industry. Charles Eliot, famed landscape architect and partner of Frederick Law Olmsted, planned the East Cambridge Riverfront as the "jewel" of the Cambridge Park System. Calling the park "The Front," Eliot envisioned a linear expanse one-half mile long encompassing all the land between Commercial Avenue and the Charles River. The Cambridge Park reports from 1895 to 1940 praised the planning of "The Front" and stressed the importance of its realization. Unfortunately, for reasons unclear, the plan was never implemented. In 1950 the City sold this piece of land to developers who constructed the present industrial buildings.



8. Circa 1900.

The final landfilling was to be culminated with "The Front," a major public park that was planned to be the "jewel" of Cambridge.



7. New England Glass Company Works.
Interior.



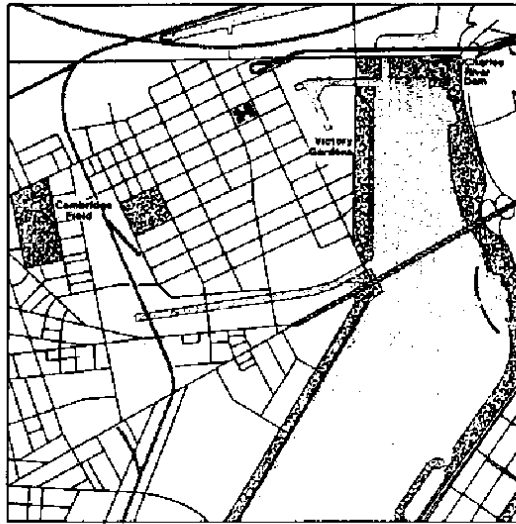
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9. East Cambridge.
The Riverfront in 1839.

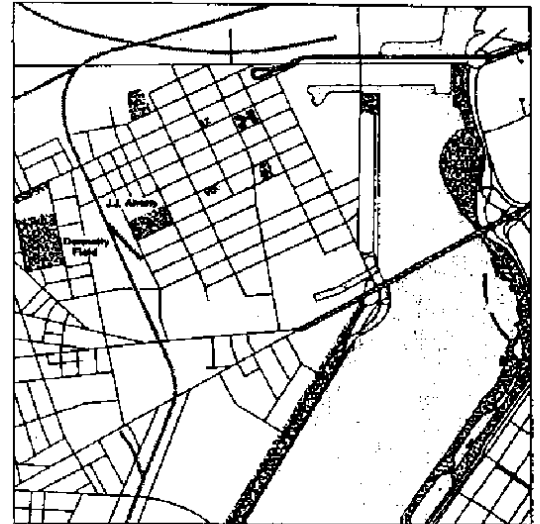
10. Quality Row.
Holy Cross Polish National Church, built in 1827, is at the left of the photograph.



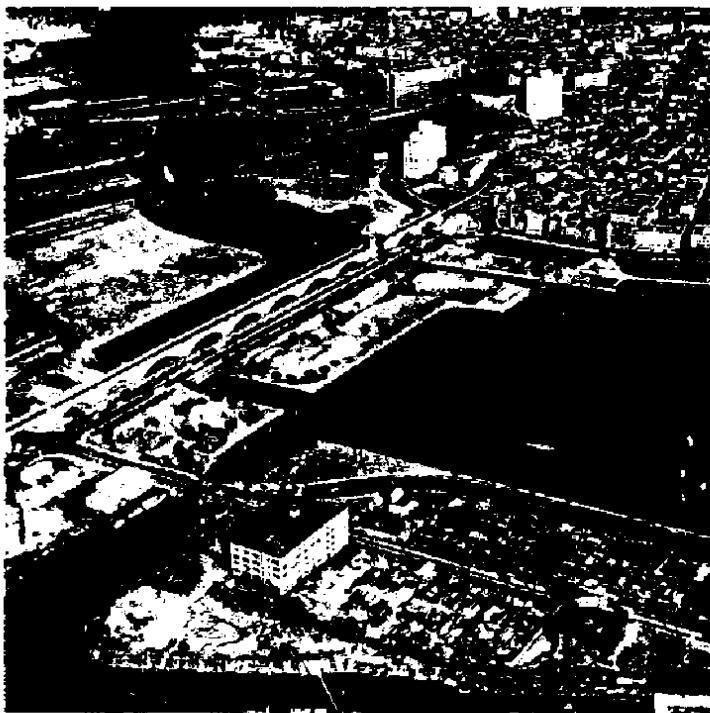
10.



11. Circa 1947.
"The Front" was never realized and temporarily became the World War II victory gardens of East Cambridge. A public park for Boston's West End and East Cambridge was built at the foot of the Charles River Dam and Viaduct. Both riverfront open spaces no longer exist.



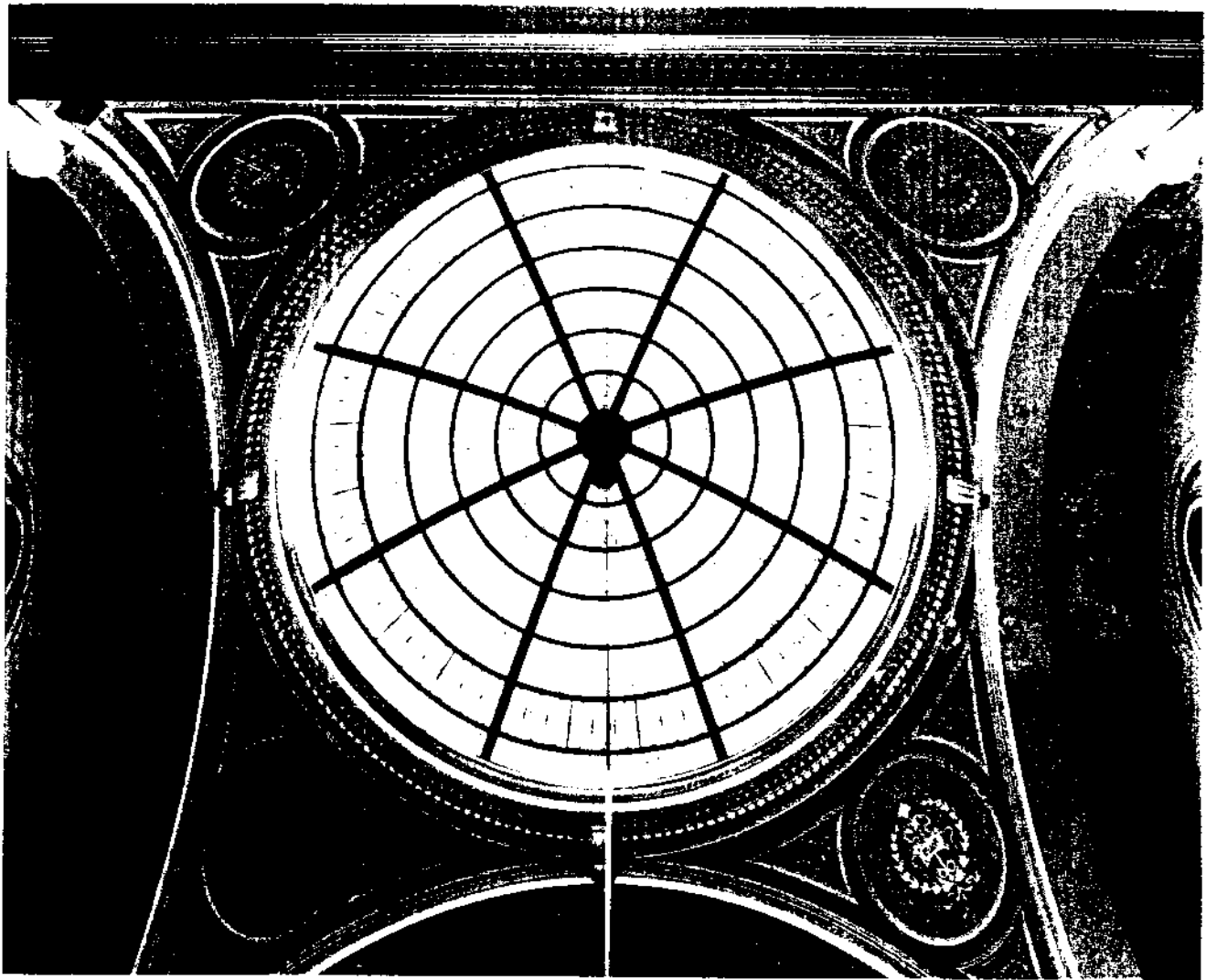
13. Circa 1977.
Cambridge's open space system has been drastically reduced during the last generation. At the same time, Boston enlarged its riverfront park system through further landfilling.



12. Aerial Photograph.
Photograph of the East Cambridge riverfront, circa 1949, clearly shows the beautiful park created by the Charles River Dam at the base of the Charles River Basin. The victory gardens and the Lechmere Canal are in the foreground. The Museum of Science began building its facilities on the Charles River Dam park site shortly after this picture was taken.



14. The Meigs Elevated Railway.
This railway was an experimental forerunner of rapid transit development in America. This photograph of 1887 shows the cylindrically-designed steam locomotive, tender, and car posed on the monorail structure in East Cambridge. The railway performed very well under extensive testing and was open for public demonstration in 1888. Unfortunately, it was felt to be a little ahead of its time and never became a part of Boston's rapid transit system.



15. Dome of the Registry of Deeds and Probate, 1898.



16. Sacred Heart Church, 1874.
The 180 foot high spire was lost in 1961.

Architectural Significance

The developmental history of East Cambridge shaped the character of its buildings. Taken collectively, the buildings of East Cambridge constitute an excellent example of the vernacular architecture of the mid-19th century in its original setting. The houses of factory workers and small businessmen have changed very little since the 19th century. These residences range in style from Georgian to the Colonial Revival of the turn of the century.

Since the middle of the 19th century, East Cambridge has owed much of its growth to manufacturing. Numerous examples of factory architecture representing the industrial growth of Cambridge are located within this part of the City. The building of the old Irving & Casson—A. H. Davenport Furniture Company, once the finest furniture makers and wood finishers in New England, is still located on Otis Street. The Davenport Company gave its name to the davenport sofa and furnished the buildings of H. H. Richardson and many other famous architects, as well as the White House and the United Nations in New York City. The oldest part of the building dates from 1866.



17. Vernacular Architecture, Mid-19th Century.
Although these buildings on Cambridge Street were replaced by the Registry of Deeds, most of 19th century East Cambridge remains intact and worthy of preservation.



18. 134 Otis Street.
Interior.

Many of the early civic, religious, and commercial buildings of East Cambridge still play an important role in the daily lives of the residents. The Holy Cross Polish National Church was built in 1827 for a Unitarian congregation. This Federal style meetinghouse is the second oldest church building in Cambridge. Saint John's Church (now Sacred Heart Church) was built in 1874 in the Gothic Revival style by East Cambridge's growing Catholic population. The Putnam School, built in 1887, stands on the site of Old Fort Putnam and an earlier Putnam School that had been built in 1825. The Queen Ann Style building has rich surface decoration of brick and terra cotta.

The Middlesex County Buildings are the most important public buildings in East Cambridge. As mentioned earlier, the Old Superior Courthouse was originally built in 1814 to plans by Charles Bulfinch. It was remodeled and enlarged by Ammi B. Young, the designer

of the Boston Customhouse. He followed closely Bulfinch's original conception. Also standing in this group of county buildings is the monumental Registry of Deeds & Probate Court, built in 1898.

Historic East Cambridge remains an island. It is no longer encircled by water but instead by industrial land. The neighborhood's historic tie to the river has been severed, and the grand vision of "The Front," which would have ensured the public right to the river, has been lost. But East Cambridge has retained its ethnic diversity and rich architectural heritage: approaches must be found that will preserve both valuable qualities. Two striking examples of the valuable architectural heritage, the Bulfinch Courthouse and the Putnam School, are vacant and are threatened with demolition. All of this reemphasizes the major currents of change that are affecting the area and further points to the need for a strong sense of direction and developmental control.



19. Putnam School, 1877.



20.

3 Issues and Opportunities

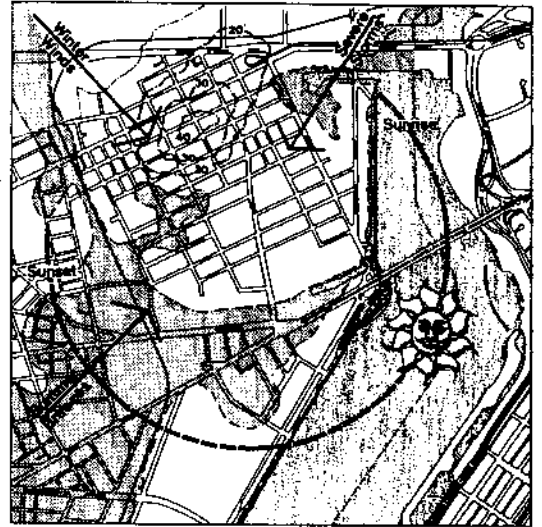
The future of East Cambridge will be determined as much by the way things are now as by plans for change. The neighborhood's locational and physical characteristics strongly influence what may be done in the future. Historic development patterns will guide change. The needs and desires of people who live, work and own property in the neighborhood must be considered. But a number of significant opportunities also exist in East Cambridge. If properly capitalized upon by the public and private sectors, these existing conditions can substantially improve both the physical environment and economic climate of East Cambridge. This chapter summarizes the issues and opportunities which have been considered in preparing the East Cambridge Riverfront Plan.

Natural Conditions

Much of East Cambridge is filled land, as in Boston, tidal flats were filled as early settlements grew and economic activity expanded. Figures 5, 6, 8, 11 and 13 show the physical expansion of East Cambridge. This landfilling gave the neighborhood a spectacular, although underutilized, urban waterfront.

Most of the neighborhood is flat, between 10 and 20 feet above sea level. (See Figure 21) The residential part of the neighborhood rises to over 40 feet. The 10 feet contour represents the limit of a 100-year flood plain. However, the new Charles River Dam at Charlestown will further stabilize the river water level to only a six inch maximum change, virtually eliminating the flooding of property.

Bedrock is located near the surface only in the higher unfilled section of the neighborhood. In the landfilled areas there is an exten-



21. Natural Conditions.

The toned land area approximates the existing ten-foot flood zone.

sive layer of soft material above the bedrock. Due to the depth to bedrock, high foundation costs are incurred for structures of more than three stories. The availability of solid foundation materials at the location of the original East Cambridge waterfront (now the edge of the residential area) has undoubtedly encouraged high rise construction there during recent years, such as the new Middlesex County Courthouse.

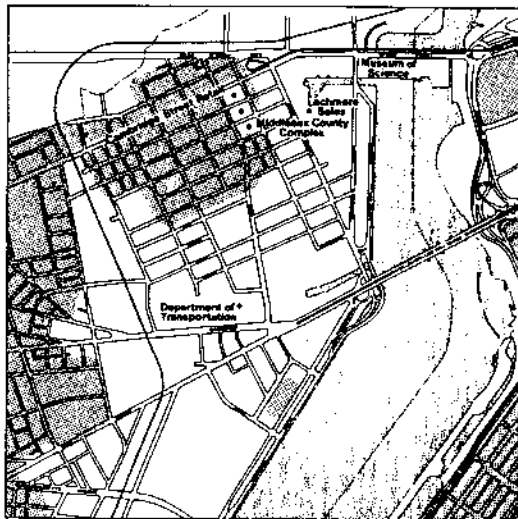
Other natural conditions, such as the direction of the sun and the shadows it casts as it travels in its east to west arc, the severe storms from the northeast, winter winds from the northwest, and gentle summer breezes from the southwest (see Figure 21), should all be considered in the site design of new development.

Existing Land Use and Development Characteristics

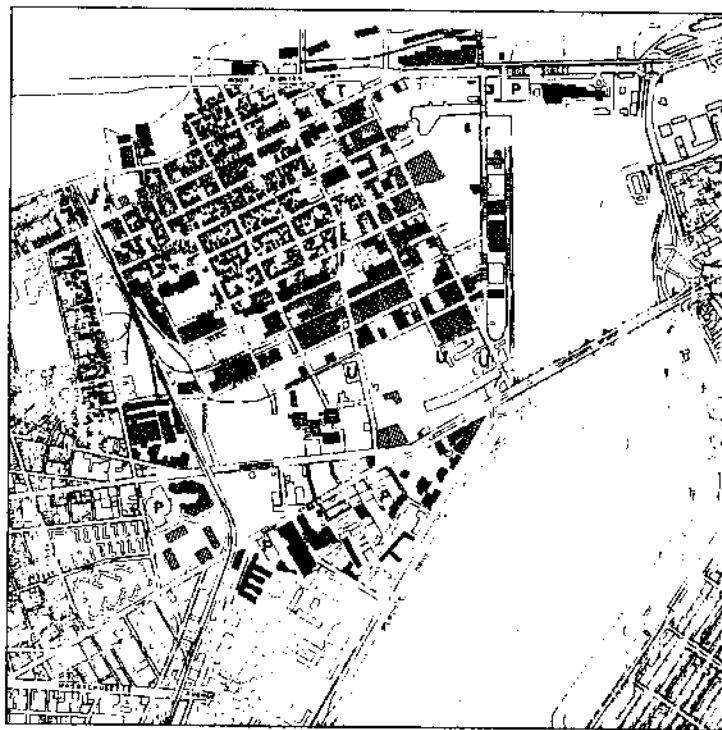
Because East Cambridge originally developed as a separate community, it now contains nearly all of the land uses found in any contemporary American city. However, two distinct areas dominate: a residential neighborhood and an industrial area which almost completely encircles it. The table below shows the breakdown of land uses by area in 1972:

	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	67	17
Commercial	25	6
Industrial, Office, Vacant	276	69
Institutional	22	5
Outdoor Recreation	8	2
Public Transportation (MBTA)	2	1
	400	100

The residential section of the neighborhood consists primarily of 2 and 3 story wood frame structures, though there are some notable groups of brick rowhouses. The neighborhood is quite dense for such low scale development, with more than forty dwelling units per net residential acre. The housing stock has deteriorated during recent decades. A recent housing condition survey indicated that two-thirds of the neighborhood's stock needs some type of improvement and twenty percent needs structural renovation. Between 1950 and 1970 the residential population dropped from about 9,000 to 5,800.



22. Generalized Land Use.
The toned area indicates predominantly residential areas. Note that Boston's housing fronts the river, while Cambridge's residential neighborhoods are landlocked.



23. Existing Land Use
(Buildings not keyed are presently vacant.)

- Residential
- Retail, Office, Hotel, Service
- Institutional and Governmental
- Industry, Research and Development, Warehousing, Construction
- T Transit
- P Structured Parking
- U Utilities

A neighborhood oriented commercial area, along Cambridge Street, is located within the residential section. The institutional uses are also primarily neighborhood oriented and include schools, churches, a firehouse and a library. The exceptions are the Middlesex County governmental complex at Third and Otis Streets, the Museum of Science on the Charles and the Federal Department of Transportation research center at Kendall Square.

The industrial section of the neighborhood consists primarily of 19th century brick factory buildings and more recent one and two story warehouse and industrial structures. Since World War II rising land and labor costs, transportation system changes, alternative space requirements, urban renewal and other factors have contributed to the decline of this area. Today there are many vacant and underutilized buildings and parcels. A more regionally - oriented department store has flourished along First Street.

Open Space

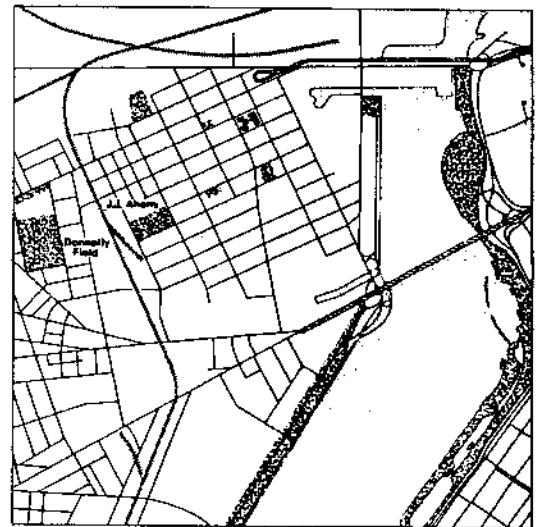
East Cambridge has a serious shortage of neighborhood - oriented parks and playgrounds. The neighborhood is vastly underserved when measured against both national and regional standards. The residential part of the neighborhood is so densely developed that there is no space for developing additional open space without displacing some other activity.

The major open space facilities, Gore Street playground and J. J. Ahern Field, are at the western periphery of the residential area forming a boundary between a small number of residences and industrial land. Both are difficult to supervise by the neighborhood and have heavy truck routes next to them.

The ring of industrial land which surrounds the residential section of the neighborhood forms a barrier to the Charles River. There is little visual evidence of the area's proximity to the water, nor are there suitable circulation links which provide residents with easy access to this significant urban amenity. However, many East Cambridge residents speak fondly of the riverfront open space that existed thirty years ago.



24. Aerial Photograph.
The Longfellow Bridge links the Boston Esplanade (foreground) with the East Cambridge riverfront at the top of the photograph.



25. Existing Open Space.

Transportation

Throughout its history East Cambridge has been well served by a variety of transportation systems: railroads, canals, local streets, regional highways, public rapid transit and bus service. Unfortunately, the range of choices is more limited today than in the past. The canals have been abandoned and filled, rail service has been curtailed, and transit facilities have deteriorated. This decline in alternative modes has contributed to heavy reliance on automobile and truck travel.

East Cambridge's location invites tremendous volumes of through-traffic daily. Monsignor O'Brien Highway carries over 38,500 vehicles per day. Memorial Drive and its extensions (the Cambridge Parkway and Commercial Avenue) carry 30,000. Both are considered an important part of the regional arterial network. Third Street, a narrow residential street, is used by more than 12,000 cars daily. Both trucks and cars use residential streets as thoroughfares at all hours.

Parking is another critical neighborhood issue. Residents and employees must compete for an insufficient number of on-street spaces. The City's residential parking sticker program has helped to some degree, but a major need for more parking still exists around the county government complex. Proposed off-street parking for the new county courthouse has yet to be built. One proposal involves replacing the Bulfinch Courthouse building with a parking lot, but only a fraction of the total need would be satisfied.

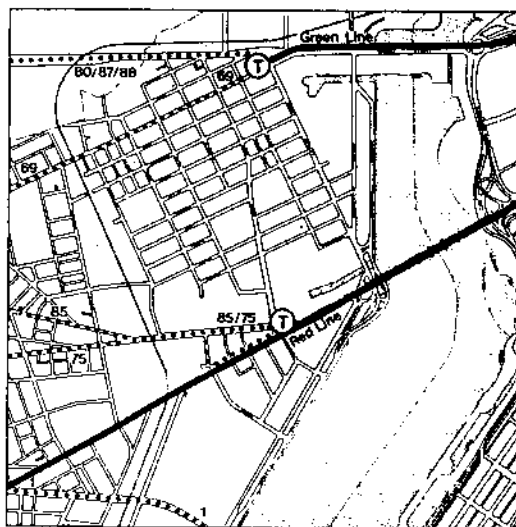


27. Third Street.
Photograph shows heavy truck through-traffic.

East Cambridge is served by two rapid transit lines, the MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) Red Line and Green Line, and seven MBTA bus lines. The Red Line station at Kendall Square is slated for extension and renovation as part of a general Red Line upgrading program. The Green Line station, the most convenient rapid transit link for neighborhood residents, is a physical eyesore and not safely accessible to pedestrians. The location of the elevated railway and station at the intersection of Monsignor O'Brien Highway and Cambridge Street creates havoc for both vehicles and pedestrians in Lechmere Square and presents a most unsightly gateway to the city. Improvement of this situation should be an integral part of the revitalization of this section of the neighborhood.



26. Existing Daily Traffic Volumes.



28. Mass Transit.
The dotted lines indicate existing bus routes.

Existing Industrial Zoning

About two-thirds of East Cambridge is zoned for industry and comprises one of the major industrial districts in the City of Cambridge. The current industrial zoning, dating from the 1950's, is extremely permissive; all types of land use except residences are permitted; high density development is allowed; and the zoning prescribes very few site design requirements such as controls on landscaping, building height, building setback and parking/loading area layout. This flexibility (allowing development of activities to much greater density than that required by most manufacturing firms) has contributed to land speculation and the inflation of property values. This land price inflation has in turn contributed to the exodus from Cambridge of those industries which have traditionally provided blue collar jobs.

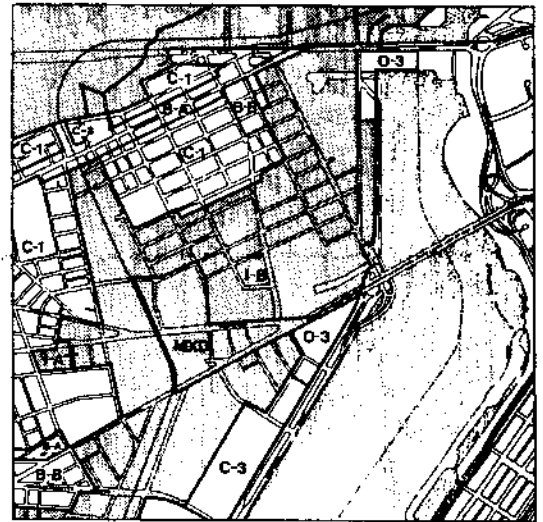
Another problem with the existing zoning is that excessive permissiveness in the industrial district provides no protection for abutting residential properties. Transitional height limitations, landscaping requirements and building setbacks could enhance the value of adjacent properties in the residential district. Furthermore, the zoning ordinance's use, density and parking requirements are not sufficiently flexible to enable the adaptive reuse of 19th century industrial and institutional buildings in the neighborhood.



29. Railroad Right-Of-Way

Much of East Cambridge's industrially zoned land is barren; spreading decay threatens the stability of abutting residential neighborhoods.

In summary, the area's zoning pattern encourages uses other than those which it intended to encourage. It does not provide the protection necessary to safeguard viable industrial activity. It does little to assure quality new development. It does not differentiate among the locational differences in East Cambridge; large land areas are treated uniformly. Zoning has encouraged an uncertain future.



30. Existing Zoning.

- 1-A Warehouse Storage, Light Manufacturing, Hotel & Office; FAR = 2.0, Unlimited Height
- 1-B Heavy Industry, Hotel & Office; FAR = 4.0, Unlimited Height, No Transitional Requirements
- C-1 Multi-Family Dwellings (Apartment House, Dormitory); FAR = 0.75, Maximum Height = 35'-0"
- C-3 Multi-Family Dwellings (Apartment House, Dormitory); FAR = 3.00, Unlimited Height
- O-3 Business & Professional Offices and Multi-Family Dwellings; FAR = 3.0, Unlimited Height
- B-A Local & Drive-in Retail Business, Multi-Family Housing; FAR = 1.0, Maximum Height = 35'-0"
- B-B General Business, Multi-Family Housing; FAR = 4.0, Unlimited Height. (Residential Requirement, see C-3)

Interest Group Perspectives

Various groups have legitimate interests in the future of East Cambridge. Certain of these interests are compatible and can reinforce one another, while others are contradictory. The challenge in planning for the future is to reach a reasonable compromise among these interests. Seven principal interest groups have been identified. They are: 1) East Cambridge residents; 2) the property owners and tenants in the commercial area; 3) landowners and tenants in the industrial zone; 4) the City of Cambridge; 5) Middlesex County; 6) Regional Agencies (the MDC and MBTA); and 7) the Commonwealth.

Most residents of East Cambridge fear new development. There has been widespread disapproval of most recent growth in the neighborhood. New buildings are taller than those built in the past, with the new courthouse reaching a height of over 200 feet. Development on this scale is viewed as incompatible with the traditional pattern of 2-3 story structures found in the neighborhood.

Other community desires include a solution for the courthouse parking shortage and an elimination of through-traffic now disrupting the neighborhood. Residents support the objectives of new job opportunities, better open space and recreation facilities and convenient linkages to new riverfront development. But most importantly, the neighborhood wishes to preserve identity. Neighborhood residents have requested a buffer between the existing residential area and new housing at the riverfront. One additional concern is the preservation of the Bulfinch Courthouse structure, in part as a neighborhood facility.

Commercial property owners and tenants desire to be good neighbors, but must remain competitive with similar businesses in other locations. In order to remain competitive, they need to maintain their visual identity and must have easy access and sufficient parking to attract customers.

Industrial property owners and tenants wish to maximize their profit. In order to do this they desire good transportation access, adequate services, a good supply of labor and a favorable tax situation. It is becoming increasingly apparent that for industries to compete satisfactorily in the labor market, they

must offer workers various amenities such as nearby shopping and entertainment facilities.

The City's goals are straightforward: 1) creation of more jobs; 2) expansion of the tax base; and 3) enhancement of the physical environment. But the City does not favor new economic activity at the expense of destroying an existing residential community.

Improving the physical environment should provide amenities for the people of East Cambridge and for city residents generally. One important aspect of physical improvement is the preservation and maintenance of historically and architecturally significant features of the neighborhood, including the Bulfinch Courthouse.

Middlesex County's interests are those of an organization which must carry on day-to-day business in East Cambridge: sufficient space to operate efficiently, convenient access, and adequate parking for its employees and visitors. Additional parking facilities for the new courthouse are badly needed. The county's proposal to demolish the Bulfinch building for a parking lot had met stiff opposition. While the county is aware of the building's historic importance, an appropriate and feasible reuse proposal had not been advanced before this study.

Two regional agencies will play an important role in the future of East Cambridge. The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) is seeking ways to improve the quality of its waterways, to increase open space, and to improve the traffic carrying capabilities and aesthetics of its parkways. The MDC opposes future landfilling in the Charles River Basin and connecting canals. The height of new development along the river is another MDC concern. Both the MDC and MBTA are concerned about the blighting and disruptive influences of the Lechmere transit station. Prior to the urban design study no specific improvements had been programmed for the station area.

The Commonwealth's policy is to promote economic development in urban centers. This policy seeks to concentrate new development and to encourage investment in the state's older cities to take advantage of the existing infrastructure.

4 Pressures for Change



31. Hard/Soft.

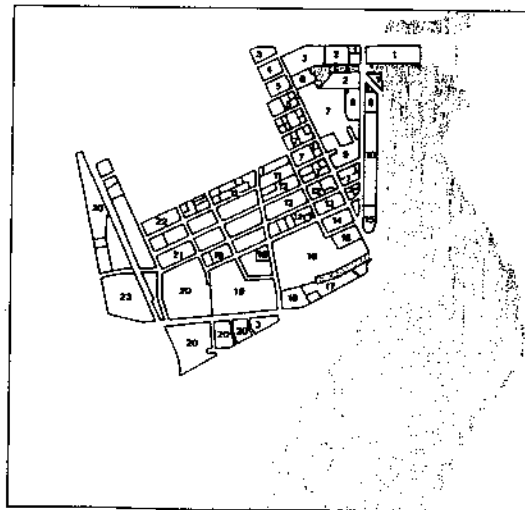
- Hard (Structure Very Likely to Remain in the Future)
- ▨ Soft (Structure Subjected to Developmental Pressures)
- Presently Vacant and/or For Sale
- Unknown Status at this Time

Analysis of current conditions in the study area indicates that much of the land is likely to undergo change during the next several years. The likelihood for change has been predicted by evaluating the relative "hardness" and "softness" of individual parcels of land. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 31.

The hard parcels are those which are unlikely to change due to physical condition, economic value, or political pressures. The soft parcels are those considered less stable and therefore more likely to change. Soft parcels include vacant land, one-story structures, dilapidated buildings, a location next to parcels where substantial new development is predicted.

The factors considered in rating each piece of land are: 1) parcel size; 2) excess development potential (relationship of what exists on the lot to what could be built under present zoning); 3) ownership; 4) age of building; 5) rehabilitation/reuse potential of existing buildings; and 6) expressed development interests of property owners.

Large land parcels are prevalent in the industrially zoned sections of East Cambridge. Lechmere, Real Estate Investment Trust of America, the National Casket Company, Carter's Ink and Cambridge Electric all own parcels of land in excess of one acre; several exceed three acres. A large portion of the remaining land is in the hands of public agencies, including the Cambridge Redevelopment Au-



32. Ownership.

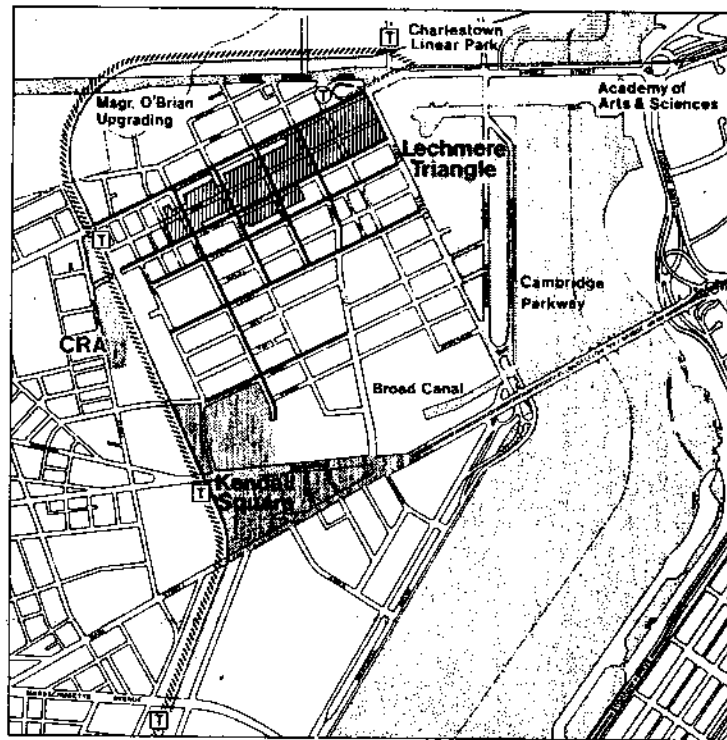
1. Commonwealth of Massachusetts
2. Boston Society of Natural History
3. Mass. Bay Transit Authority
4. Sultana Realty Trust
5. Charles Webb
6. Canal Realty Trust
7. Mezuries Realty Trust
8. Charter House of Cambridge
9. National Casket Co., Inc.
10. Real Estate Investment Trust of America
11. Enterprise Moakler Co.
12. William Crane Properties Trust
13. Binney Realty Trust
14. Northwestern Mutual Life Ins. Co.
15. Carter's Ink Co.
16. Commonwealth Gas Co.
17. Cambridge Electric Light
18. The Badger Co., Inc.
19. United States of America
20. Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
21. Industrial Stainless Steel, Inc.
22. Busch & Co. of Massachusetts
23. Boston Woven Hose & Rubber Co.

thority, the Metropolitan District Commission, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. Land owned by Carter's Ink and the Museum of Science has been for sale during the course of this study.






Currently there is substantial discussion concerning new development in the study area. The City, landowners and developers are actively considering potential development projects in the area. Preliminary discussions indicate a strong willingness to redevelop. The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority is about to begin development at the nearby Kendall Square urban renewal area. Within the residential area certain streets and sidewalks have been programmed for rebuilding and for improvements such as lighting and trees.

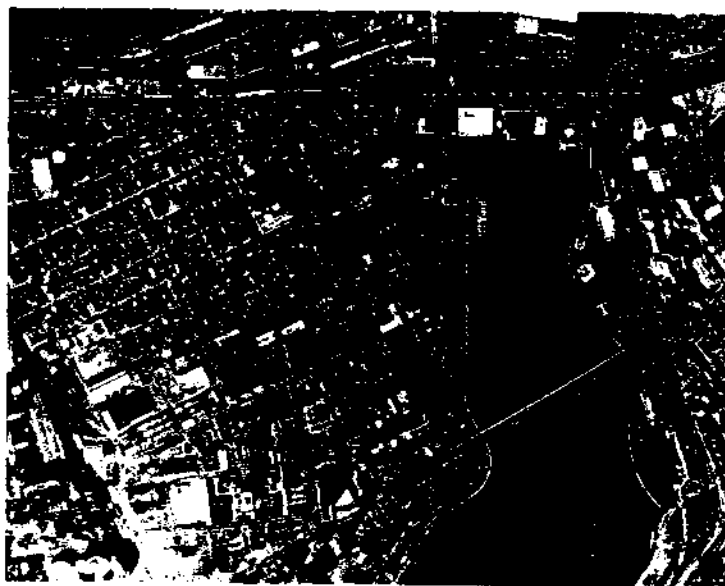
Part of the residential neighborhood has been nominated for designation as a National Register Historic District. If the nomination is accepted, substantial funds could become available for historic preservation, rehabilitation and building reuse. The MDC has plans to upgrade Monsignor O'Brien Highway and to build a linear park along the Charles connecting East Cambridge with the new Charlestown Navy Yard development and park system.

A conservative estimate indicates that more than 100 acres of land in the study area are soft. New development (programmed and under consideration), easy access, proximity to downtown Boston and MIT, the availability of a ready work force, and a high percentage of land being held in large available parcels valued at prices generally ranging from \$5.00 to \$8.00 per square foot all increase the likelihood for change in East Cambridge.



33. Opportunities

-  Areas presently under study.
-  Proposed National Register Historic District
-  Roadways and/or sidewalks slated for improvement utilizing block grant funds
-  Extension of Mass Transit
-  Possible station locations



34. Aerial Photograph of East Cambridge.
Numerous large vacant parcels of land surround historic East Cambridge.

5 Development Policies

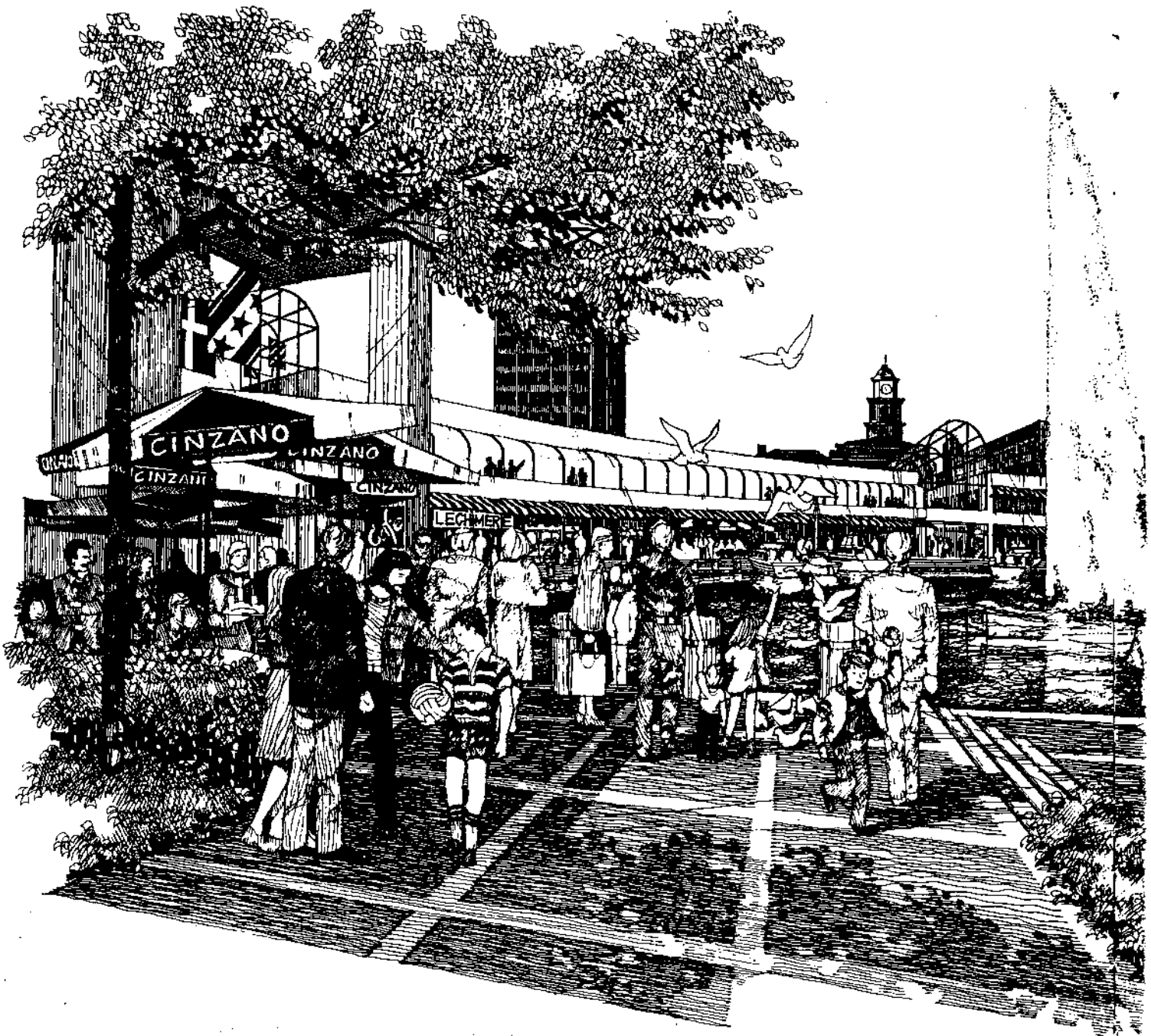
The urban design analysis of East Cambridge has identified four development districts within the neighborhood (see Figure 36). The shape of these districts evolved during the study, based on land ownership, existing development patterns, and perceived possibilities for the future. The district lines shown on the map are not proposed zoning districts and do not necessarily represent fixed boundaries. They are intended to identify areas with common characteristics in which similar themes for the future seem to make sense.

A set of development policies is proposed for each of these areas. These policies should shape public and private development decisions by providing a framework evaluating both specific development proposals and public actions such as zoning changes or roadway improvements.

Development objectives and design guidelines are specified in the appendix for each of the districts. These are guidelines on preferred land use, scale of development (amount and size), form of development (location, arrangement and massing of buildings), linkages (traffic patterns and physical interrelationships within and among areas) and design details.

Transcending the district policies are several fundamental design principles which have emerged during the study and which form the underlying basis of the East Cambridge Riverfront Plan. These principles are:

- Recognize and exploit the inherent value of the riverfront as an environmental and economic asset of city-wide significance.
- Create a new positive and exciting physical image for the City's eastern edge and entrances.
- Create new opportunities for tax and job producing development.
- Preserve the physical and social characteristics of the East Cambridge residential community.
- Create focused centers for new commercial, residential and industrial activities.
- Create major new open spaces and a greenway system connecting them.
- Develop strong physical, visual and functional interrelationships within and among development areas.
- Encourage the preservation and reuse of worthwhile older buildings.
- Reduce the role of the automobile in East Cambridge by encouraging transit use and by creating better opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Divert and reduce truck traffic.



35. Rendering of the Planned Lechmere Canal Development. The Canal's fountain is the open space focal point of the mixed use development. This development incorporates retail, office, and residential uses as well as public parking facilities. Strong pedestrian linkages to historic East Cambridge, the Riverfront, and a new re-located Lechmere Square transit station form the basis of the plan.